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EXAMINER	
DEMICCO, MATTHEW R	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2611	

DATE MAILED: 02/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/600,352	NEIFER, WOLFGANG	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Matthew R Demicco	2611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *19 July 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *62-107* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *62-107* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This action is responsive to an amendment filed 7/19/04. Claims 62-107 are pending. Claims 64, 66, 92 and 96 are amended. Claim 107 is new. The objections to the Specification are withdrawn in light of the amendments. The 35 U.S.C. 112 rejection of Claims 94 and 95 is withdrawn, however the Examiner advises Applicant that the broadest reasonable interpretation of "internet computer integrated in the PC card" will be applied in making a rejection. Further, Applicant's lack of response with regard to the Examiner's Official Notice of Claims 70 and 102-103 is taken as admission of the well known prior art.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 84, 62 and 92 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 62, 64-65, 68, 72-76, 80-81 and 83 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,724,106 to Autry et al.

Regarding Claim 62, Autry discloses a multimedia system (See Figure 1) comprising a display device (122), a base station (118) incorporating a receiver (See Figure 3, 316) for multimedia transmissions and connected to the display device and a wireless remote control device (124). The base station has a plurality of personal computer card connectors (316-322) connected to a bus (312). It is inherent that such a system has associated hardware and software functionality. The system bus and associated devices connected thereto constitute a communication module in the PC card format (ISA or PCI, See Figure 16, 312) and incorporate a network client computer (modem 322) and a wireless link (324) to the remote control. The RF module may be an ISA board, which is used to directly control the system (Col. 7, Lines 20-40) and subsequently the network client computer (modem) for information services (Col. 17, Lines 48-52) or video conferencing (Col. 18, Lines 49-67).

Regarding Claim 64, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein a conditional access module (See Figure 4, 418) is coupled to the PCI bus (Col. 8, Lines 31-36). This reads on the claimed communication module incorporating a conditional access module.

Regarding Claim 65, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 64, wherein the CAM module comprises a smart card (See Figure 4, 418). It is inherent there must be a smart card reader in order to utilize the conditional access card. This reads on the claimed CAM module comprising a chip card reader.

Regarding Claim 68, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the communication module comprises a modem (322). The modem is operable

to receive information services and video conferencing as stated above. This reads on the claimed interface for connection to a provider network.

Regarding Claim 72, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the remote control device generates control information and outputs it in the form of a control signal (Col. 7, Lines 20-40), the control information selecting information from display information displayed on the display device (Col. 7, Lines 6-16 and Col. 11, Lines 24-51).

Regarding Claim 73-75, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the remote control device has an input unit for generating pointer position information (See Figure 9B, 910) and selection information (913) as control information. The position of a pointer being able to be set on a screen of the display device by means of the pointer position information in order to position the pointer on a specific display information on the display device and the position of the pointer being confirmed by means of the selection information is well known in the art. In the system of Autry, a track ball is shown that is used to move a cursor (Col. 11, Lines 24-29) and a trigger button (enter key) is shown that is used to select items on the screen (Col. 11, Lines 38-51).

Regarding Claim 76, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 73. It is well known in the art that in such a system with a remote control (See Figure 9A) that there may be a cursor key block for generating the pointer position information. Autry further discloses a wireless keyboard for remote control of the system with a cursor key block (See Figure 10).

Regarding Claim 80, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the remote control device generates user-defined control signals for controlling the network computer as stated above in Claims 62 and 73.

Regarding Claim 81, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the communication module incorporates a user identification module (Col. 17, Lines 20-26).

Regarding Claim 83, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62, wherein the base station is a personal computer (See Figure 1, 118) connected to a television set (150). It is well known in the art that a set top box is a computing device with a processor, memory, and input/output. Therefore, the system of Autry reads on the claimed set top box.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 63, 79, 84, 87 and 89-90 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,80,155 to Erlin.

Regarding Claim 63, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. What is not disclosed, however, is that the remote control device and the communication module comprise encryption and decryption means for encrypted transmission of data at

least from the remote control device to the communication module. Erlin discloses a remote control device (See Figure 5) that utilizes encryption to encrypt the wireless signal (Col. 4, Lines 17-19) to a set top terminal (See Figure 4, 40). This reads on the claimed remote control and communication module comprising encryption and decryption means. Erlin is evidence that one of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the ability to encrypt data communicated from a remote control. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the encryption and decryption of Erlin in order to protect sensitive data such as financial transactions as disclosed by Erlin.

Regarding Claim 79, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 63. Autry further discloses that a smart card (418) is used in the conditional access system to decrypt received data (Col. 8, Lines 29-33). In combination, it would have been obvious to use the conditional access smart card of Autry to process encrypted data transmitted from the remote control of Erlin. This reads on the claimed encrypting means being embodied on an exchangeable chip card.

Regarding Claim 84, Autry discloses a wireless remote control device (See Figure 9A) for a communication module (See Figure 1, 118). What is not disclosed, however, is that the remote control comprises a CAM module and encryption means for encrypting control data to be transmitted to the communication module. Erlin discloses a remote control device (See Figure 5) that utilizes encryption to encrypt the wireless signal (Col. 4, Lines 17-19) to a set top terminal (See Figure 4, 40). Erlin further discloses that a user must enter a PIN in order to transmit information to the set top (Col. 3, Lines 27-33). This

reads on the claimed CAM module. Erlin is evidence that one of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the ability to encrypt data communicated from a remote control and verify a user. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the encryption and CAM module of Erlin in order to protect sensitive data such as financial transactions as disclosed by Erlin.

Regarding Claim 87, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 84. Autry further discloses that a smart card (418) is used in a conditional access system to decrypt received data (Col. 8, Lines 29-33). In combination, it would have been obvious to use the conditional access smart card of Autry to encrypt data transmitted from the remote control of Erlin. This reads on the claimed encrypting means comprising a chip card reader.

Regarding Claim 89, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 84. Autry further discloses that the remote control comprises means for generating pointer position control data as stated above.

Regarding Claim 90, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 84. Erlin discloses that users must identify themselves by entering a PIN before making a transaction as stated above. This reads on the claimed user identification module.

7. Claims 66-67 and 77-78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,880,769 to Nemirofsky et al.

Regarding Claim 66, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. What is not disclosed, however, is that the CAM module comprises a chip card reader. Nemirofsky discloses a remote control (See Figure 6a) with a chip card reader (See Figure 4, 26) for the purposes of financial services and payments, video on demand billing, home shopping, etc. (Col. 4, Lines 49-47). Account information is stored on the card (Col. 4, Lines 50-58) and a user must enter a security code in order to authorize a transaction (Col. 5, Lines 9-15). Nemirofsky is evidence that one of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the ability to implement a remote control device with a conditional access module. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the conditional access remote control of Nemirofsky in order to allow a user to conveniently authorize and pay for various services without having to get up and access the base station.

Regarding Claim 67, Autry in view of Nemirofsky disclose a system as stated above in Claim 66. Nemirofsky discloses that the CAM module of the remote controller comprises a chip card reader as stated above.

Regarding Claim 77, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. Further, Autry in view of Nemirofsky disclose a system wherein electronic payment functions are implemented on the remote control device as stated above in Claim 66.

Regarding Claim 78, Autry in view of Nemirofsky disclose a system as stated above in Claim 77. Nemirofsky discloses that the electronic payment functions are

implemented by means of the CAM module of the remote controller, which further comprises an exchangeable chip card reader as stated above.

8. Claims 69-70, 92-94 and 96-106 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al.

Regarding Claim 69, Autry disclose a system as stated above in Claim 68. What is not disclosed, however, is that the modem has an interface for wireless connection to the provider network. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known in the art to use a wireless connection for transmitting data. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the wireless connection of the well-known prior art in order to provide back channel data services for locations where a wired channel is not available.

Regarding Claim 70, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. What is not disclosed, however, is that the client network computer incorporates a JAVA engine. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known in the art that a computer-based multimedia system can incorporate a JAVA engine, either as a standalone application or as part of a web browser. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the JAVA engine of the well-known prior art in order to facilitate compatibility with a wide range of Internet-based multimedia applications.

Regarding Claim 92, Autry discloses a communication module (See Figure 3, modem 322) in the form of a personal computer card (connected to PCI/ISA bus 312, see

Figure 16) comprising an interface (1612). The modem is in the same computer (integrated with) a chip card reader (See Figure 4, 418) and a conditional access system as stated above. The communication module (modem card) is insertable into a corresponding slot in the computer device (PCI or ISA bus) as is well known in the art. Further, the computer of Autry reads on the claimed set top box as stated above. What is not disclosed, however, is a wireless transmitter/receiver. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known in the art that a modem such as the one disclosed by Autry may communicate over a wireless network. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the wireless transmitter/receiver unit of the well-known prior art in order to provide for communications where a wired connection is not available.

Regarding Claim 93, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92. As is well known in the art, a modem inherently contains a decoding device in order to convert received audio data into binary digital data. This reads on the claimed decoder device integrated in the PC card.

Regarding Claim 94, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92. As is well known in the art, a modem is a computing device that can be used to connect to the Internet. The modem therefore reads on the claimed Internet computer integrated in the PC card.

Regarding Claim 96, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 94, wherein the chip card reader is adapted for use as a conditional access card for decrypting

a received digital signal (Col. 8, Lines 30-33). This reads on the claimed subscriber access module.

Regarding Claim 97, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92, further comprising a modem integrated in the PC card as stated above.

Regarding Claim 98, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 97, wherein the modem may be a wireless device as stated above. This reads on the claimed modem including a data radio modem.

Regarding Claim 99, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92, further comprising a wireless modem device as stated above. What is not disclosed, however, is a compressor integrated in the PC card that decompresses data received by the transmitter/receiver unit. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known to use compression in a data transmission. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the compression of the well-known prior art in order to achieve higher data rates in a limited bandwidth. This reads on the claimed PC card (modem) comprising a decompressor that decompresses data received by the transmitter/receiver unit.

Regarding Claim 100, Autry discloses a communication module (See Figure 3, modem 322) in the form of a personal computer card (connected to PCI/ISA bus 312, see Figure 16) comprising an interface (1612). The modem is in the same computer (integrated with) a chip card reader (See Figure 4, 418), a conditional access system as stated above, and a converter that converts computer image data into TV data (318). What is not disclosed, however, is a wireless transmitter/receiver. Official Notice is

hereby taken that it is well known in the art that a modem such as the one disclosed by Autry may communicate over a wireless network. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the wireless transmitter/receiver unit of the well-known prior art in order to provide for communications where a wired connection is not available.

Regarding Claim 101, Autry disloses a system as stated above in Claim 92, wherein the system is operable to receive RF or IR (Col. 6, Lines 1-4) signals from a remote control (coupled to a portable operating device). What is not disclosed, however, is that the IR transmitter/receiver unit is integrated in the PC card. Official Notice is hereby taken that it would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that a single card could embody the functionality of several devices. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the communication module of Autry with the IR transmitter/receiver in order to consolidate communications devices onto a single card in order to conserve space and reduce power requirements.

Regarding Claims 102 and 103, Autry discloses a module as stated above in Claim 92. What is not disclosed is the use of a DECT, GSM or DVB standard. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known in the art to use a standardized communication format. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the module of Autry in view of Nemirofsky and further in view of Kurz with the DECT, GSM or DVB standards of

the well known prior art in order to increase ease of implementation and compatibility while reducing costs.

Regarding Claims 104 and 106, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92, wherein the modem is operable to communicate via a wireless interface. This reads on the claimed interface to a radio network.

Regarding Claim 105, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 92, wherein the communications interface may be standard PCI bus (Col. 6, Lines 62-64). This reads on the claimed common interface.

9. Claims 71 and 82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,990,803 to Park.

Regarding Claim 71, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. What is not disclosed, however, is that the remote control device is provided with a fingerprint sensor for user identification. Park discloses a remote control device with fingerprint recognition for user identification purpose (Col. 1, Lines 56-65). Park is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefits of implementing fingerprint identification on a remote control device. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the system of Autry with the fingerprint identification of Park in order to identify a user without the use of passwords which may be forgotten or chip-cards which may be lost or broken.

Regarding Claim 82, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 62. Autry in view of Park further disclose a remote control device incorporating a user identification module as stated above in Claim 71.

10. Claim 85 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of Erlin and further in view of Nemirofsky et al.

Regarding Claim 85, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 84. What is not disclosed, however, is that the CAM module comprises a chip card reader. Nemirofsky discloses a remote control (See Figure 6a) with a smart card (Col. 7, Lines 62-67) wherein the smart card is used to perform various secure financial, video on demand, shopping and billing purposes as stated above. This reads on the claimed CAM module comprises a chip card reader. Nemirofsky is evidence that one of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the ability of using a smart card in a conditional access module. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry in view of Erlin with the smart card of Nemirofsky in order to provide a multitude of online services in a secure fashion as disclosed by Nemirofsky.

11. Claim 86 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of Erlin, further in view of Nemirofsky et al. and still further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,955,722 to Kurz et al.

Regarding Claim 86, Autry in view of Erlin and further in view of Nemirofsky disclose a system as stated above in Claim 85. What is not disclosed, however, is that the chip card reader is a plug-in PC card. Kurz discloses a system wherein a PC card is adapted to receive a chip card (See Figure 1). Kurz is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of being able to read a chip-card from a PCMCIA card. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the PC card system of Autry in view of Erlin and further in view of Nemirofsky to accept the chip card as in the system of Kurz in order to have hot-swappable hardware-based user authentication and conditional access information in a small footprint, high-utility computing device.

12. Claim 88 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of Erlin and further in view of Kurz et al.

Regarding Claim 88, Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 87. What is not disclosed, however, is that the chip card reader is a plug-in PC card. Kurz discloses a system wherein a PC card is adapted to receive a chip card (See Figure 1). Kurz is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of being able to read a chip-card from a PCMCIA card. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the PC card system of Autry in view of Erlin to accept the chip card as in the system of Kurz in order to have hot-swappable hardware-based user authentication and conditional access information in a small footprint, high-utility computing device.

13. Claim 91 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of Erlin and further in view of Park.

Regarding Claim 91. Autry in view of Erlin disclose a system as stated above in Claim 84. What is not disclosed, however, is a fingerprint sensor for user identification. Park discloses a remote control device with fingerprint recognition for user identification purpose (Col. 1, Lines 56-65). Park is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefits of implementing fingerprint identification on a remote control device. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the system of Autry in view of Erlin with the fingerprint identification of Park in order to identify a user without the use of passwords which may be forgotten or chip-cards which may be lost or broken.

14. Claims 95 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,308,317 to Wilkinson et al.

Regarding Claim 95, Autry discloses a system as stated above in Claim 94. What is not disclosed, however, is that the Internet computer comprises a Java engine. Wilkinson discloses a smart card (See Figure 1 and Col. 7, Lines 43-46) with a Java-based application programming and execution environment including a Java virtual machine (Col. 8, Lines 20-22). This reads on the claimed Internet computer integrated on a PC card comprising communication module further comprising a Java engine. Wilkinson is evidence that one of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the

ability to use a Java engine on a smart card. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the smart card of Autry with the Java engine of Wilkinson in order to enhance system security by providing smart card applications with individual Java virtual machines as disclosed by Wilkins (Col. 3, Lines 59-67).

15. Claim 107 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Autry et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,069,672 to Claassen.

Regarding Claim 107, Autry discloses a multimedia system (See Figure 1) comprising a display device (122), a base station (118) comprising a receiving device (See Figure 3, 316) for multimedia transmissions and connected to the display device and a wireless remote control device (124). The base station has a plurality of personal computer card connectors (316-322) connected to a card terminal (bus 312). It is inherent that such a system has associated hardware and software functionality. The system bus and associated devices connected thereto constitute a communication module in the PC card format (ISA or PCI, See Figure 16, 312) and incorporate a communication module (RF 324). The RF module may be an ISA board, which is used to directly control the system (Col. 7, Lines 20-40) and subsequently the network client computer (modem) for information services (Col. 17, Lines 48-52) or video conferencing (Col. 18, Lines 49-67). What is not disclosed, however, is that both the communication module and the remote control device comprise a transmitting/receiving unit for a wireless bi-directional communication between each other.

Claassen discloses a remote control and receiver (See Figure 1) where both the communication module and the remote comprise a transmitting and receiving unit (See Figure 4, IR units 61, 62, 28 and 29) wherein an unblocking signal is sent to the remote control (Col. 6, Lines 24-30) in order to unlock pay television program channel keys (Col. 5, Lines 51-58). Further bi-directional communications are used such that the receiver can communicate with a remote control to negotiate a communication protocol (Col. 7, Lines 20-40). Claassen is evidence that one of ordinary art would recognize the benefits of having bi-directional communications between a remote control and a communication module. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Autry with the bi-directional communications of Claassen in order to allow the communication module to unlock certain features of the remote control or auto-learn a communications protocol without any user programming required.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew R Demicco whose telephone number is (703) 305-8155. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chris Grant can be reached on (703) 305-4755. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MRD

mrd
January 28, 2005

CHRIS GRANT
PRIMARY EXAMINER